

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED IN THE

Cathedral Church of St. Paul,

BEFORE THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR,

THE

JUDGES,

ALDERMEN, SERJEANTS AT LAW,

SHERIFFS,

AND THE

CITY OFFICERS,

ON SUNDAY, THE TWENTY-NINTH OF APRIL, 1798,

BEING THE

First Sunday in Easter Term.

BY THE REV^d JOHN HUTCHINS, M.A. K
CHAPLAIN TO HIS LORDSHIP.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. WILSON, ST. PETER'S-HILL, DOCTORS'-COMMONS.

MDCCXCVIII.

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

Cathedral Church of St. Paul,

BEFORE THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR,

THE

JUDGES,

ALDERMEN, SERJEANTS AT LAW,



CITY OFFICERS,

ON TUESDAY, THE TWENTY-NINTH OF APRIL 1851.

BEING THE

Fifth Sunday in Easter Term.

By the Rev. JOHN HUTCHINS, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO HIS LORDSHIP.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. WILSON, ST. PETER'S-HILL, DOCTORS' COMMONS.

MCCCXCVIII.

ANDERSON, MAYOR.

*Tuesday the 8th Day of May, 1798, and in the Thirty-Eighth Year of
the Reign of George the Third, King of Great-Britain, &c.*

IT IS ORDERED,

THAT the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend JOHN HUTCHINS, M. A. Chaplain to the Right Honourable the LORD-MAYOR, for his excellent Sermon preached before his LORDSHIP, the JUDGES, ALDERMEN, SERJEANTS AT LAW, SHERIFFS, and CITY OFFICERS, at the *Cathedral Church of St. Paul*, on the *Twenty-Ninth of April* last, being the *First Sunday in Easter Term*; and that he be desired to print the same, and cause a Copy thereof to be sent to the LORD-MAYOR, JUDGES, ALDERMEN, SERJEANTS AT LAW, and CITY OFFICERS.

R I X.

ANDERSON, MAYOR.

*A Common Council holden in the Chamber of the Guildhall of the City of
London, June, 1798,*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

THAT the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend JOHN HUTCHINS, M. A. Chaplain to the Right Honourable the LORD-MAYOR, for his very excellent Sermon preached before his LORDSHIP, the JUDGES, ALDERMEN, SERJEANTS AT LAW, SHERIFFS, and CITY OFFICERS, at the *Cathedral Church of St. Paul*, on the *Twenty-Ninth of April*, being the *First Sunday in Easter Term*, and that he be requested to print the same, and cause a Copy thereof to be sent to every MEMBER of this COURT.

R I X.

ANDERSON, Mayor.

Resolved, That the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, do hereby express their appreciation of the services rendered by the Mayor, and the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, during the year 1878.

IT IS ORDERED,

THAT the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, do hereby express their appreciation of the services rendered by the Mayor, and the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, during the year 1878.

ANDERSON, Mayor.

Resolved, That the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, do hereby express their appreciation of the services rendered by the Mayor, and the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, during the year 1878.

RESOLVED TRANSMITTED,

THAT the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, do hereby express their appreciation of the services rendered by the Mayor, and the Board of Aldermen, in the City of New York, during the year 1878.

R. A.

TO THE
Right Hon. Sir J. W. ANDERSON, Bart.
LORD MAYOR,

THE
WORSHIPFUL THE ALDERMEN,

THE
SHERIFFS,

AND THE
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

THIS
SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

Cathedral Church of St. Paul,

ON SUNDAY THE TWENTY-NINTH OF APRIL, 1798,

AND PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR OBEDIENT

AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

TO THE
Right Hon. Sir J. W. ANDERSON, Bart.

LORD MAYOR

WORTHINGTON THE ALDERMEN

SHERIFFS

AND THE
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONDON



Cathedral Church of St. Paul

ON SUNDAY THE TWENTY-NINTH OF APRIL, 1798

AND PRINTED AT THE REQUEST

IS RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED

BY THEIR OBEDIENT

AND OBLIGED SERVANT

THE AUTHOR

ISAIAH, CHAP. LV. VER. 13.

INSTEAD OF THE THORN SHALL COME UP THE FIR-TREE, AND
INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE-
TREE: AND IT SHALL BE TO THE LORD FOR A NAME,
FOR AN EVERLASTING SIGN THAT SHALL NOT BE CUT
OFF.

THE happy age of Christianity, predicted in the infancy
of the world, and spoken of in the most animated language
by a succession of Prophets, is described in this figurative
passage of Scripture. It directs our contemplation to a period,
when the principles of the Christian religion shall have their
proper influence on the conduct, and when will be experienced
all the spiritual blessings promised under the old and new
dispensation — “Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,
“and the leopard lie down with the kid: then shall the calf,
“and the young lion, and the fatling, lie down together,

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“ and

“ and a little child shall lead them : then shall the cow and
 “ the bear feed ; the lion shall eat straw with the ox, and
 “ and their young ones shall lie down together : then shall
 “ the sucking child play on the hole of the asp, and the
 “ weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den.”
 “ And instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and
 “ instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree : and it
 “ shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign,
 “ that shall not be cut off.”

Wherever the influence of the Christian religion is referred
 to in Scripture, a remarkable *change* is represented : it is
 compared to a *new birth* — from which arise *new* qualities,
new apprehensions, and different inclinations from those pos-
 sessed under the dominion of sin — “ If any man be in Christ
 “ (says the Apostle), he is a new creature : old things are
 “ passed way, and all things become new. In Christ Jesus,
 “ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing,
 “ but a new creature ;” the thorn will be changed into the
 fir-tree, the brier into the myrtle.

Nor is it an extraordinary circumstance, when the *nature*
 and *design* of the Christian religion are considered, that the
 change

change should be represented in language so pointed and forcible. Before the coming of Christ, the heathen world was exceedingly corrupt, and sunk into the grossest idolatry and superstition : and even the dispensation, given to the Jews, required the performance of numerous rites and ceremonies, under the penalty of a severe and temporal punishment. But as our Saviour came to establish a spiritual kingdom, his doctrines had that direct tendency, and call for every sentiment of gratitude. Most of them are *plain* and *simple* ; some of them *sublime* and *mysterious*, such as might be expected from a person, who came from God ; and all of them *animating* and *consolatory*, consistent with the rational faculties of human nature, and upon which may be raised every moral and divine virtue. They tend to clear and confirm the grand truths of natural religion — they contain new arguments and engagements to holiness of life — and they are calculated to suppress and erase those impious principles, which unhappily prevail in the world, and are dangerous obstacles to piety and virtue.

Whoever candidly considers the *doctrines*, which are rightly called the peculiar articles of the Christian faith, will observe their direct tendency to produce such effects. If the *knowledge* of God's infinite love for mankind in sending his own Son

to obtain their redemption—if the knowledge of that Son offering up himself a sacrifice for sin, and thereby sealing a covenant of pardon and reconciliation with all true believers; his being afterwards raised from the dead, and carried into heaven, where he sits at the right hand of his Father—if the *assistance* of the Holy Spirit, promised to his sincere followers to overcome their spiritual enemies, and preserve their integrity, in opposition to every temptation—and if an *assurance* of Christ's coming again in the end of the world to bring every secret thing into judgment, whether it be good or evil—I say, if *doctrines*, which no other religion ever unfolded, do not promote holiness of life, and thereby fulfil the end it is predicted to accomplish, we must not look for this desirable effect, from the adoption of any other system hitherto known among the kingdoms of the world.

Of the same tendency are the *precepts* of its divine Author. To be subjects of his kingdom was to have a better righteousness than the scribes and pharisees; the whole course of the moral conduct must exceed their's. It is no longer, “an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth.” Instead of such rigorous retaliation, a mild and gentle behaviour is prescribed—a willingness to forgive, and a readiness to part with a portion of
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our right for the sake of tranquillity — we are to be patient in suffering, and to overcome evil with good. Whatever our Lord inculcates, is either an injunction of some moral virtue, or a prohibition of some destructive vice ; in what manner the one may be improved, or the other mortified. Although many ceremonies of the Mosaic law are abolished, which held the conduct under an insufferable bondage ; yet, whatever restraint can destroy the prevalence of iniquity, and tend to real purity, is carefully preserved, and still exacted with the utmost severity. Indeed, the duties of human life, in all its relations, towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves, are placed in such a point of view by our blessed Master, in his sermon on the Mount, that after a candid investigation, the most refined precepts of Gentile philosophy appear contemptible, limited in their design, and ineffectual in their operation. What was said by his enemies, on a public occasion, on this subject, may be surely said by us, that “ never man spake like this “ man.”

And if we add to the *doctrines* and *precepts* of that exalted character, the *life* he led, another corroborating testimony will be obtained. He went about doing good, guided solely by the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind — His whole
conduct

conduct was full of innocence and simplicity ; as free from guile, as from the suspicion of vice ; it was modest, humble, and self-denying ; meek under the greatest injuries, patient under unparalleled sufferings, and disposed to forgive and to benefit his bitterest enemy — His miracles, those stupendous acts of divine power, which extorted many an unwilling exclamation *that he was truly the Son of God*, were wrought to establish the growth of Christianity ; not mere *signs*, such as the carnal Jews required, but *actions* of the most diffusive beneficence, which, as they convinced the understanding, that the religion He taught was of divine authority, very powerfully recommended the adoption of its precepts, from the salutary ends it was calculated to produce.

Thus was the preaching of the Gospel in concord with the prophecy in the text ; and although the Christian religion is not yet embraced with that seriousness and purity it deserves, much of its benign influence may nevertheless be traced in the world. The page of history relates a dreadful and degrading account of outrages against reason and decency, committed under the existence of Pagan theology. Images, the work of men's hands, had temples reared for their worship, and priests consecrated to their service — children were offered to idols, and
passed

passed through the fire, as propitiatory sacrifices—the unfortunate captive, of whatever age, sex, or condition, was transferred from one master to another, like a beast of burthen—on the same funeral pile, which consumed the ashes of a husband's corpse, smoked the glowing remains of his murdered consort—unnatural vices, if not sanctioned, were publicly tolerated—and prisoners taken in war were not only barbarously treated, and unfeelingly slain, but actually feasted upon.

To what other cause are we to attribute that *change*, which has taken place, where the fount of the Gospel has reached, equal indeed to the transformation of the thorn into the myrtle, but from the influence of Christianity? In the silent course of domestic life its operations are very evident: we may observe it upon parents in their families—upon men servants and maid servants—upon the orderly tradesman—the quiet villager—the manufacturer at his loom—and the husbandman in his fields—the governor, the magistrate, the judge, the citizen, and the subject, are secretly influenced to discharge properly their respective duties. Christianity has also mitigated the conduct of war, and the treatment of captives—abolished polygamy, and restrained the licentiousness of divorces—put
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¹ Vide Paley.

an end to the exposure of children, and the immolation of slaves. Christianity has suppressed the combats of gladiators, and the impurity of religious rites—if it has not banished unnatural vices, it has at least the toleration of them—it has greatly meliorated the condition of the laborious part of mankind, by procuring for them a day of weekly rest—and it has produced many establishments for poverty and sickness, for deserted infancy, and decrepid old age.

In proportion as the vital spirit of Christianity is permitted to operate, it benefits society. Where it has never reached, or wherever it has been banished, there occurs such a lamentable difference, as should admonish every member of a Christian Church, how dangerous it is to part with her sacred tenets. Glorifying as we do in the name of Christ, we feel it our pride, and, blessed be God, we have hitherto had the ability to support those numerous establishments, which are monuments of British glory, and British munificence. Whilst the enemies of our nation, who have openly apostatized from the doctrines of the Gospel, find those springs dried up, which formerly ran in many channels, and refreshed the sick and deserted, the aged and infirm, we are able to relieve the *mother* sorrowing under the *pangs of child-birth*—to maintain hundreds of little out-casts

casts in a *Foundling Hospital* — to raise an *Asylum* for the female orphan, from the snares of a seductive world — in conjunction with the munificence of a pious Prince, to educate and cloath the sons and daughters of *decayed citizens* — to open an house of *reform* for the children of infamy and vice — to preserve the *lunatic*, incapable of self-government, from an untimely death — to console and instruct the *drooping penitent*, when despised by her sex, and abandoned by our's — and to tranquilize the last days of the *veteran soldier* and *weather-beaten mariner*, by affording them retirements from the warfare and storms of life, where they may be prepared for eternity, and attain, by the grace of God, the heavenly prize of their high calling.

Nor is the benign influence of the Christian religion less striking in the impartial and human *adoption* and *execution* of the laws of our country. A terror as the Magistrate must always be to the evil doer, and painful as the infliction of punishment is on a fellow-creature ; yet, who can draw the comparison between the *present* and *former* state of legislative science, without feeling and acknowledging its superiority over the boasted jurisprudence of the ancients? What is it but Christianity, which causes justice to be so *impartially* and *tenderly*

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administered —

administered — which protects, with the same anxious care, the person of the poorest cottager, and the property of the richest subject — and which restrains, so admirably and so beneficially for society, those whom the laws of religion and conscience cannot influence?

Whilst so many subjects of other nations, and, perhaps, whilst too many of our own, are lost in dreams of speculative freedom — by the labours of the legislators of our country, by the profound and impartial discrimination of its Judges, and by the talents and integrity of the British Bar — we possess unerring proofs of substantial and practical freedom; our persons and liberties are completely protected, and our fame and possessions inviolably preserved. Long may we have this theme of exultation! May laws, so wisely framed, so essential to the welfare of society, ever derive lustre from the purity of their administration; and continue to breathe that mildness and equity, so consistent with the Gospel of Christ!

Taking, therefore, in this brief view the benefits of the Christian religion — what it has already effected, and what it has prevented — its good tendency must be clearly seen, and how nearly it has answered the prediction in the text, by
changing

changing "the thorn into the fir-tree, and the brier into the
 "myrtle." But much as it *has* done, *more* is to be expected,
 when the Christian religion is professed in its genuine purity :
 When that period is arrived, it will be found the *glorious*
name, the *monument*, or *memorial of the goodness of God*, as
 mentioned in the conclusion of the text. And what greater
 memorial can there be of divine goodness, than the calling
 of us Gentiles, through his blessed Son, to the knowledge of
 himself, and to the rewards of another life ? He who looks
 upon his former condition, reduced by sin, the child of Adam
 and transgression ; and afterwards beholds it raised to a state
 of grace, and restored to every lost privilege, through the
 merits of Christ, must contemplate himself as a wonderful
 object of his Maker's regard. *Creation* and *preservation* are
 doubtless great blessings ; but what would they have been
 without the last and adorable act of *redemption* ? We are now
 created and preserved to fill the functions of life, "that look-
 "ing for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of the great
 "God and Saviour, we may live righteously, soberly, and
 "godlily in this present evil world."

He who beholds Christianity in this point of view, and
 strives to fill properly the exalted character he bears, will be

known by him, after whom he is called. His *Christian name* will be an *everlasting sign*, like the distinction placed on the door posts of the Israelites, in the general massacre of the Egyptian first-born, to preserve them from evil, and to mark them from all who despise the riches of his grace; and, in the day of judgment—it will be that *mark*, by which the angels of God shall know them, and place them on the right hand of their Saviour.

As, therefore, revelation has described what a happy change will be wrought, when Christianity is sincerely embraced and practised, let us become Christians in deed and in truth; and, as far as in us lieth, promote what we daily pray for, the coming of Christ's spiritual kingdom. If, under the present circumstances, when there is, as it has been foretold, a sad falling away from the Gospel, we are, in a great degree able to restrain the vices of individuals, and to give that energy and effect to legal government, which recent events require—what harmony, what security, what brotherly love would prevail, were more of its vital spirit felt among us, were it practised in its native purity, *in glory to God, and good-will towards mankind!* Then, indeed, the gloomy aspect of affairs will be speedily changed; and that tyrannical ambition, which
now

now seeks for gratification, in defiance of the tears of the orphan, and the cries of the widow, will be gradually tempered, and finally allayed—" the wolf and the lamb, the lion
 " and the kid, will lie down together, and a little child shall
 " lead them."

And its consequences will be as salutary to *ourselves*. We shall be enabled to preserve our respective duties with proper dignity. Consoled and supported under every painful vicissitude, we shall have imparted, even *here*, a peace, which the world cannot confer, nor destroy — " For neither death, nor life,
 " nor things present, nor things to come, shall separate us
 " from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 And hereafter, when we have exchanged the cares and troubles of the present state, for the repose and joys of the next, we shall perceive the strict analogy, between the happiness of mankind, through the Gospel, and the revelation of it in the text—" Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and
 " instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree : and it
 " shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign
 " that shall not be cut off."

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now seeks for gratification, in defiance of the tears of the orphan, and the cry of the widow, will be gradually torn apart, and finally shivered—the work and the lamp, the lion and the kid, will lie down together, and the little child shall be led home.

And its consequences will be satisfactory to ourselves. We shall be enabled to preserve our respective duties with proper dignity. Contended and supported under every painful vicissitude, we shall have imparted, even now, a peace, which the world cannot confer, nor destroy. For neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And hereafter, when we have escaped the cares and troubles of the present state, for the eternal joys of the next, we shall perceive the living analogy, between the happiness of mankind, through the Gospel, and the revelation of it in the text. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fig-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree, and it shall be more the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be cut off.

